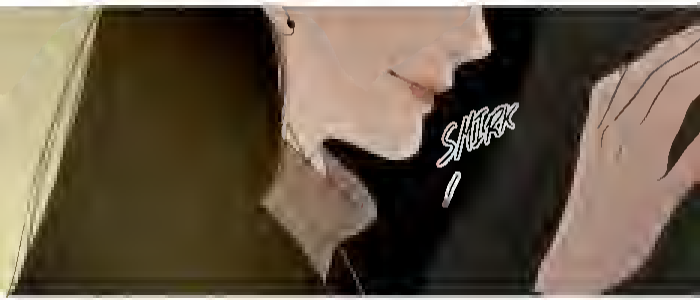
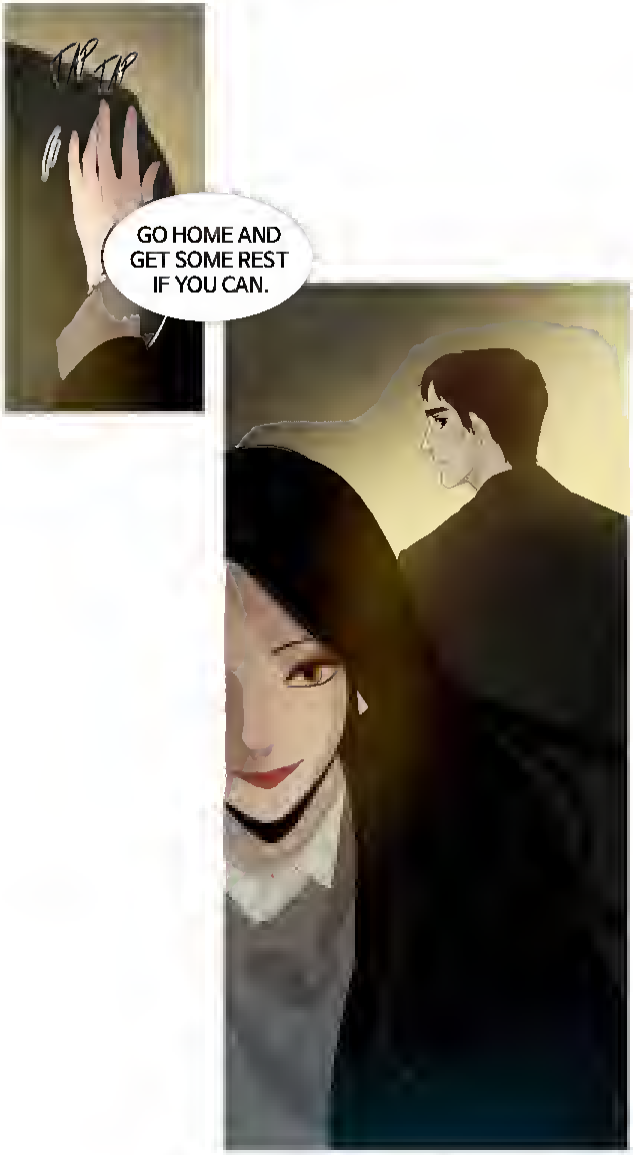
TAP
ABOUT EL-01.

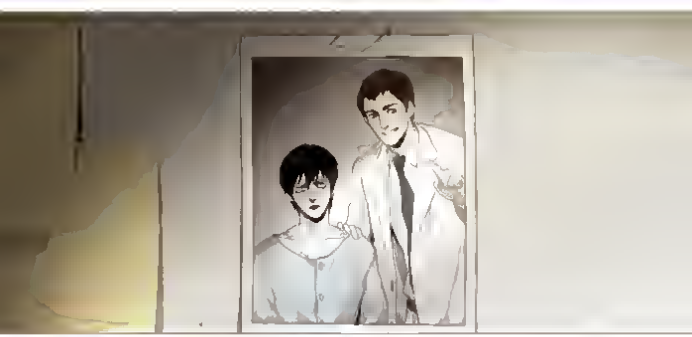
I'D LIKE TO BRING HIM BACK TO THE LAB SOONER THAN SCHEDULED...
WHAT DO YOU THINK, HUBERT?
...I'M NOT SURE.


SHOCK
!


TAP TAP
GO HOME AND GET SOME REST IF YOU CAN.

Winter Woods

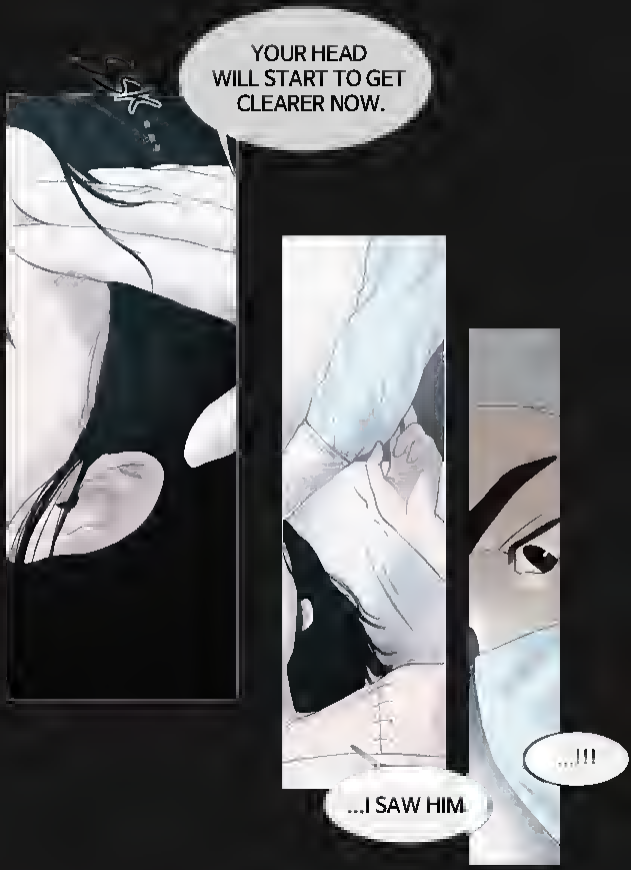
AFTER THE BOSS LEFT,
I STAYED BEHIND BY MYSELF AND
SAT STARING BLANKLY INTO SPACE.

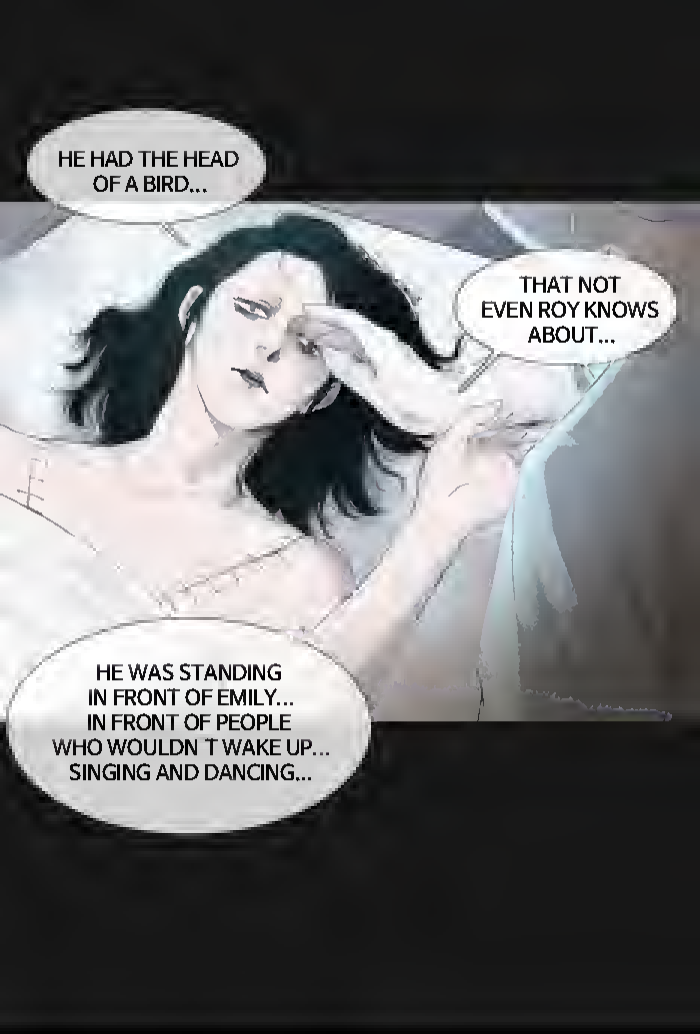


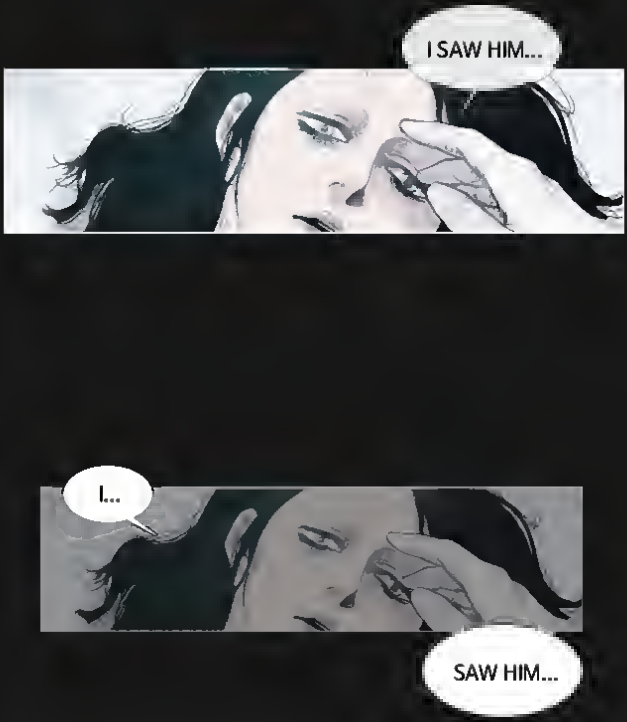
I DON'T KNOW WHY
I THOUGHT ABOUT THIS-

BUT SUDDENLY-

I REMEMBERED WHEN WINTER WAS
DAZED FROM MEDICATION AND
MUMBLING ABOUT HIS PAST TO ME.

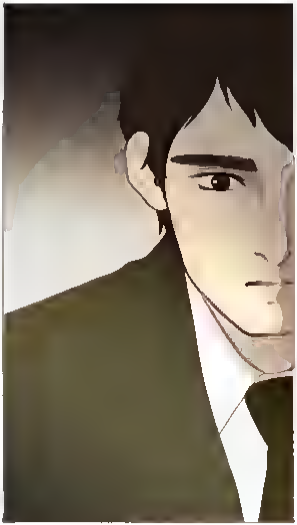

YOUR HEAD WILL START TO GET CLEARER NOW.
...I SAW HIM.
...!!!


HE HAD THE HEAD OF A BIRD...
THAT NOT EVEN ROY KNOWS ABOUT...
HE WAS STANDING IN FRONT OF EMILY... IN FRONT OF PEOPLE WHO WOULDN´T WAKE UP... SINGING AND DANCING...


I SAW HIM...
I...
SAW HIM...

A BIRD'S HEAD.
PEOPLE WHO WOULDN'T WAKE UP.

THE NEXT DOOR
NEIGHBOR WHOSE
NAME ROY KNOWS...



AT THAT MOMENT,
I COULD FEEL THE THINGS I HAD BEEN UNCERTAIN
ABOUT STARTING TO COME TOGETHER AND
BECOME CLEARER.

IT WAS...

* A DOCTOR FROM ROME WHO WORE A BIRD MASK. THERE WERE STORIES THAT HE WAS SPREADING THE BLACK PLAGUE, AND THAT EVERY PATIENT WHOSE HOUSE HE VISITED ENDED UP DYING.

YOU FOLLOW ME AROUND WITH YOUR RIDICULOUS DETECTIVE SKILLS AND THEN SUDDENLY DRAG ME HERE AND TELL ME YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY-

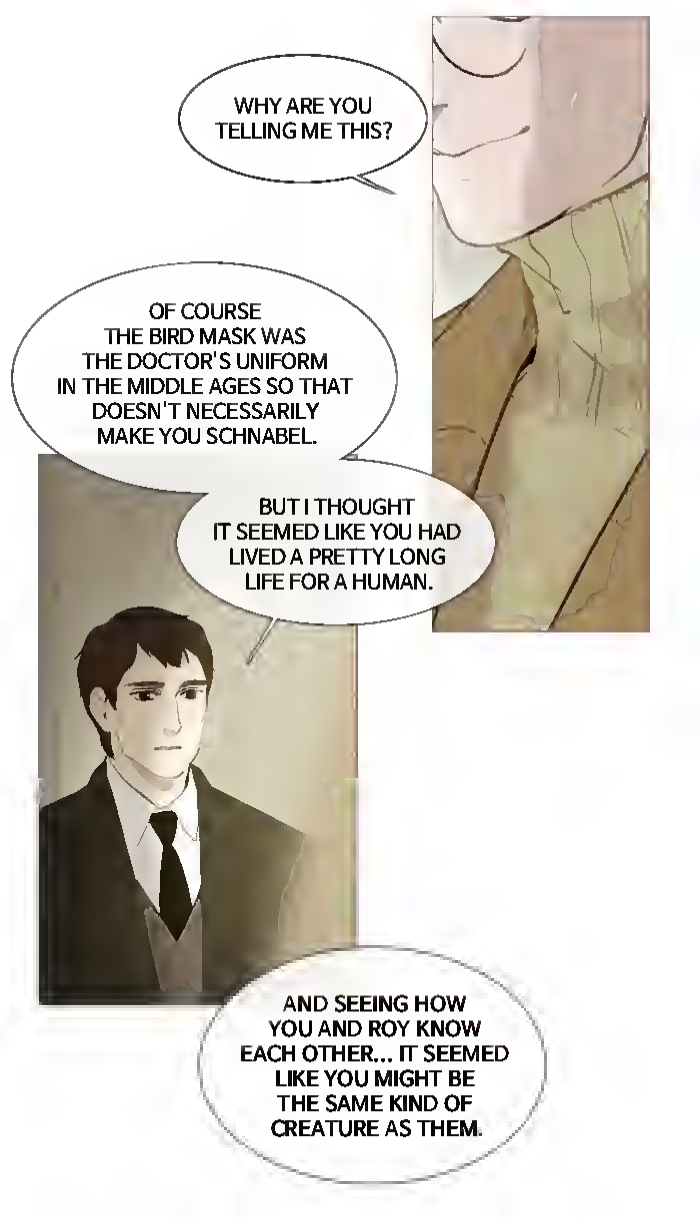
WHO? SCHNABEL? WHO'S THAT?

DOCTOR SCHNABEL VON ROM. YOU REALLY DON'T KNOW HIM?

IT MAY SOUND RIDICULOUS TO YOU, BUT YESTERDAY, I THOUGHT HE MIGHT EVEN BE YOU.
JUST SO YOU KNOW, WINTER AND ROY HAVEN'T LEFT THE LAB SINCE THEY WERE BROUGHT HERE FROM GERMANY IN 1945 AND THEN STAYED AT JANE'S HOUSE.

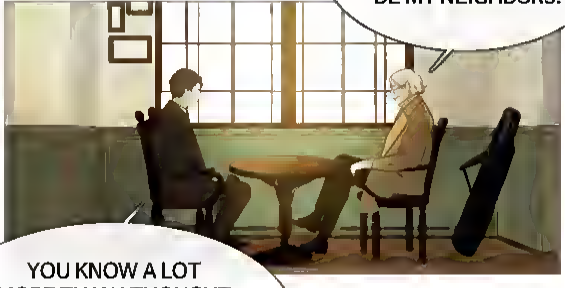
WHICH MEANS THAT YOU, WITH YOUR YOUTHFUL LOOKS, ARE NO ORDINARY PERSON EITHER.

OF COURSE IT'S JUST A GUESS, BUT I'VE HEARD SOME OTHER THINGS AS WELL.


WHY ARE YOU TELLING ME THIS?
OF COURSE THE BIRD MASK WAS THE DOCTOR'S UNIFORM IN THE MIDDLE AGES SO THAT DOESN'T NECESSARILY MAKE YOU SCHNABEL.
BUT I THOUGHT IT SEEMED LIKE YOU HAD LIVED A PRETTY LONG LIFE FOR A HUMAN.
AND SEEING HOW YOU AND ROY KNOW EACH OTHER... IT SEEMED LIKE YOU MIGHT BE THE SAME KIND OF CREATURE AS THEM.

...WELL,
THIS IS QUITE A SURPRISE.
I DIDN'T THINK THERE WOULD BE
ANYONE CHECKING ME OUT
AS ACTIVELY AS YOU.

AND EVEN
IF THERE WERE,
I ASSUMED IT WOULD
BE MY NEIGHBORS.



YOU KNOW A LOT
MORE THAN I THOUGHT.
YOU WEREN'T EVEN
SURPRISED TO HEAR THAT
WINTER WAS IN A LAB.

I JUST
HAPPENED TO
HEAR ABOUT IT.

I HAVE A FAVOR TO ASK OF YOU.

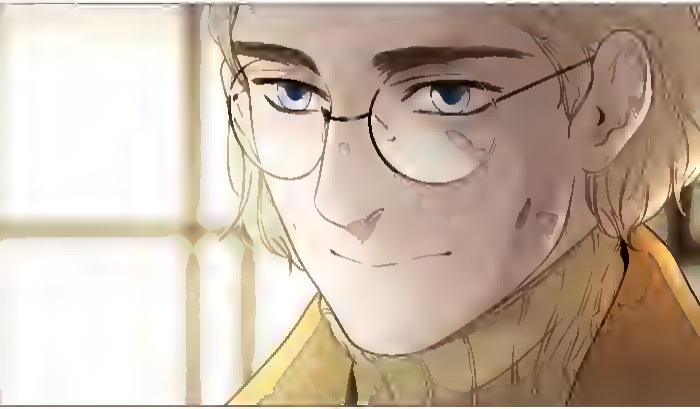
YOU'RE PROBABLY GOING TO ASK ME TO HELP WINTER OR SOMETHING, RIGHT?
BUT THERE'S SOMEONE ELSE THAT I HAVE TO HELP.

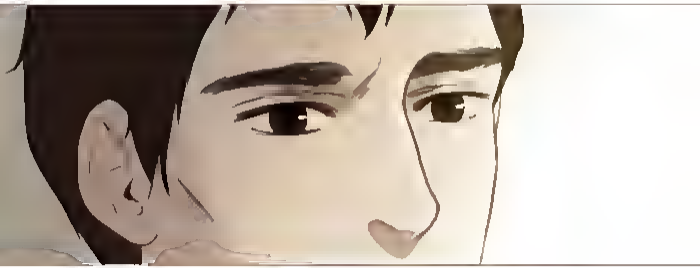
WELL. IN THE END.
I GUESS HELPING HER OR
HELPING WINTER IS REALLY
THE SAME THING.

IS THAT
ALL YOU HAVE TO SAY?
I'M KIND OF BUSY.
AH-
JUST
ONE SECOND.

HERE'S MY CARD.
I CAN'T DO ANYTHING TO HELP YOU ANYWAY.
TO BE HONEST, I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY YOU'RE EVEN TELLING ME ALL THIS.

I'LL WAIT FOR YOUR CALL.
WHISH





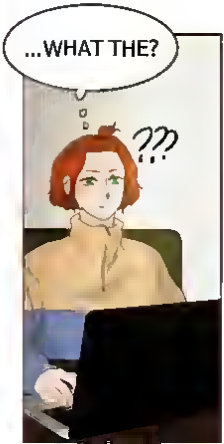
UNLIKE WINTER,
ALL OF HIS YEARS OF LIVING
HAVE MADE HIS EYES A BIT SCARY.

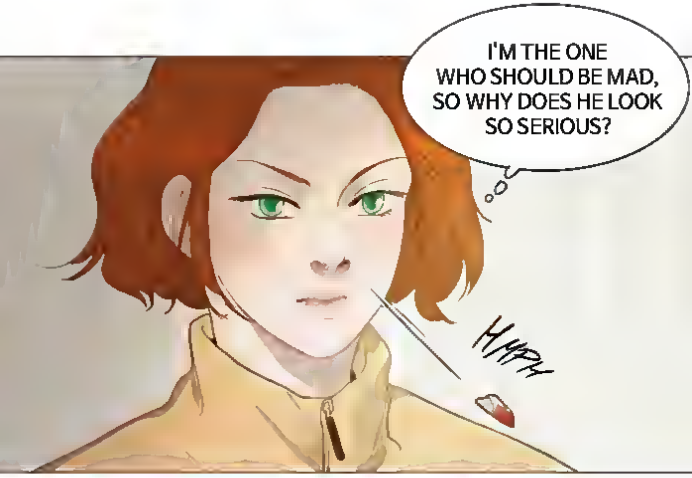
THIS IS GETTING INTERESTING.

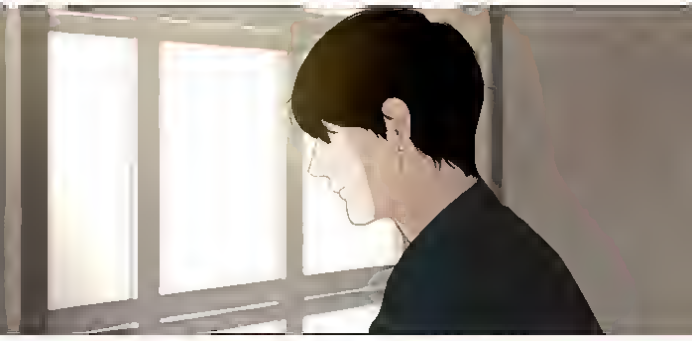
LOOKING FOR PART-TIME WORK
PICK
CREAK
THIS PLACE LOOKS DECENT.

WHY ARE YOU BACK SO SOON?
.....
STEP
STEP
SINCE YOU DON'T KNOW HOW TO "PROPERLY" HIDE YOUR EMOTIONS, FOR NOW, JUST HIDE THEM ALL.
LIKE WHEN YOU HID IN THE FOREST BEFORE.

STEP


...WHAT THE?
???


I'M THE ONE WHO SHOULD BE MAD, SO WHY DOES HE LOOK SO SERIOUS?
HMPH



WHAT AM I DOING WITH HIM ANYWAY?
I SHOULD BE LOOKING FOR A PART-TIME JOB.

WHISPER~
ROY, THERE'S A PROBLEM. I CAN ALREADY FEEL SOMETHING IN MY BODY BUT IT'S SO HARD TO PRETEND IT'S NOT THERE.
HOW WAS I BEFORE? I CAN'T REALLY REMEMBER.
I'M NOT EVEN SURE HOW TO ANSWER JANE.
WHISPER
IT'S OKAY. YOU'RE DOING FINE. JUST KEEP YOUR FACE NEUTRAL LIKE THAT!
OKAY, ROY.

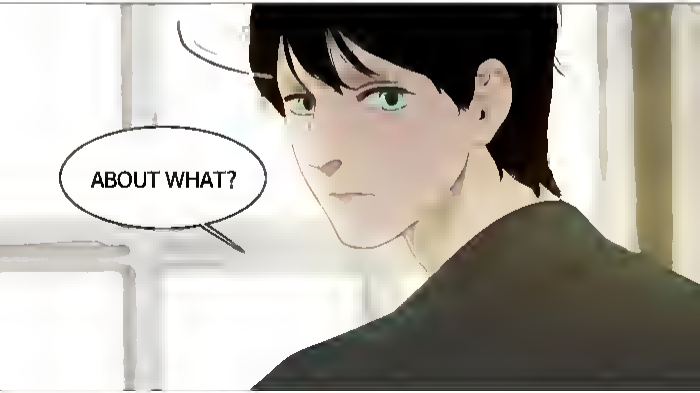
LUNCH TIME
WINTER-
I MADE SOME
PASTA, DO YOU
WANT SOME?
THAT'S OKAY.

JANE'S BREAKTIME
??????

DINNER TIME
I'M GOING TO EAT,
ARE YOU GOING TO
SKIP DINNER TOO?
YEAH.

I-I'M HUNGRY...!
HOW LONG DO I HAVE TO STAND HERE LIKE THIS?
ROY!???
I WANT TO STOP LOOKING OUT THE WINDOW NOW!
I JUST WANT TO GO TO JANE AND
SWEAT
SLEEPING
HEY!
I NEED TO TALK TO YOU FOR A MINUTE!

.....


ABOUT WHAT?

DOESN'T THIS WHOLE SITUATION SEEM KIND OF RIDICULOUS?
ALRIGHT, I ADMIT IT. I WAS WRONG TO INTRUDE ON YOUR PRIVACY. I'M SORRY. I'VE REALLY BEEN THINKING ABOUT IT.
I WOULD BE ANGRY TOO IF I WERE YOU.

NOT EVEN FAMILY MEMBERS SHOULD BE LOOKING IN EACH OTHER'S PRIVATE DIARIES.
I WON'T DO THAT AGAIN. OKAY?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN??

I APOLOGIZED. SO YOU CAN STOP DOING THAT AND RELAX. YOU'RE MAKING ME WORRIED AND UNCOMFORTABLE
AND YOU HAVEN T EATEN ANYTHING ALL DAY.
YOU'RE NOT GOING TO KEEP PROTESTING BY NOT EATING LIKE A KID, ARE YOU?

Winter Woods

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STORY BY COSMOS
tnvcosmos@naver.com

ART BY VAN JI
qkswltnr@naver.com

LINE Webtoon